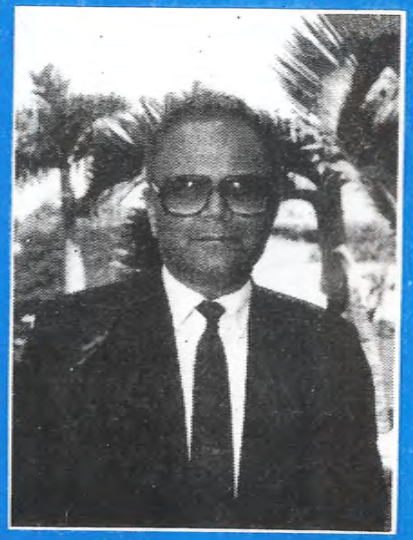

Laureate of the College of Agriculture, 1961, the author read for his B.Sc (Honours) in Agricultural Science and, subsequently, for a 2 year Masters' degree by thesis on Agricultural Economics, at the University of Reading, in England. He joined the Mauritian world of work at the Agricultural Marketing Board, where he became General Manager, before joining the University of Mauritius as Professor of Agriculture in 1973. He has been Vice-Chancellor of the University since 1979. Chairman of the Association of Commonwealth Universities, 1986-87.

Among his latest writings are:

A Tale of Unsurpassed Resilience (EOI, 1990)
Campus Chorus *(poetry)*; (University of Mauritius, 1990)
The Mauritian School for Scientific Agriculture 1914-89 (EOI, 1991)
Autonomy and Freedom in Academe (University of Mauritius, 1991)
Sindhu's Quintessence (EOI, 1992)
Mystique Mathematical (University of Mauritius, 1992)
Varsity at Réduit: The Out-Turn of a Calculated Risk, 1965-90 (EOI, 1992)
Campus Chorus-2 (University of Mauritius, 1992)

ISBN 99903-0-147-6

Jagadish MANRAKHAN

CAMPUS CHORUS-3

UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS

CAMPUS CHORUS-3

Jagadish MANRAKHAN

UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS

University of Mauritius
© Editions de l'Océan Indien (1992)

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PREAMBLE

To **'La famille préférée de l'enfant**

SANJEEV.'

❄ ❄ ❄ ❄

Once when my wife and I were overseas, we received a personal shopping list from our son Sanjeev who described himself as ***l'Enfant Préféré de la Famille;*** *hence this dedication.*

❄ ❄ ❄ ❄

I am indebted to His Excellency the President, Mr Cassam Uteem, for his thoughtful foreword; and to Régis Fanchette for his literary criticisms and his generous commentary.

The picture on the front cover is the **Trochetia boutonnania,** *the national flower of the Republic of Mauritius.*

October 1992 **Jagadish MANRAKHAN**

FOREWORD

Besides being the subject of one of the poems of his **Campus Chorus - 3**, I am also honoured by Professor J. Manrakhan to be asked to write its Foreword.

I should hate to miss such an opportunity offered to me to pay tribute to all who tread the thrilling path of scholarly and sapiential pursuits.

What can better symbolise the wisdom of the age than the University Campus? That is the place where the enterprising spirit is at its best and where it is possible to build up Utopias – not as an exercise in futility, but as a release of additional intellectual space for working out the drama of life. The aim, as I have said in my first address to the nation, is to 'Go for Gold'. One cannot afford to aim for less. This is what I would call the constructive vision.

I cannot agree more that a campus should have at least a Tower but it would be a sad day if it were to become an "ivory tower", and not function as a beacon light.

The following verses came to my mind while going through **Campus Chorus – 3.** I submit them for your reflection:

"Knowledge without action may be mere information.

Action without wisdom may be mere exertion.

But knowledge and action impregnated with wisdom can help build our earthly mansion."

Cassam UTEEM
President

25th August 1992

COMMENTARY

Regis Fanchette

Professor Jagadish Manrakhan's new volume of poetry, **CAMPUS CHORUS – 3,** strikes a novel note quite distinct, it seems to me, from the high-key strains of **'MYSTIQUE MATHEMATICAL'**, his first work I reviewed.

The pervasive Campus ambience is struck, in this new work, with a pen strung with amused delight: the irony is playful, the sarcasm amiable, whenever the need arises. Mauritian life, Mauritian society are under scrutiny here through the Campus microscope, not so much to be righteously weighed up, as to be amusingly sifted and sampled.

Thus, there blows into many a poem of this collection an airy, relaxed attitude to Mauritian life and its values, to the changes in our society and status, as typified, for instance, in the delightful 'ROUGAILLE 'N' PUD' pinpointing tellingly our new Republican outlook, which appears to have taxed Jagadish Manrakhan's thinking strongly in this volume –

Yes, indeed! :

"Those souls nostalgic
who hanker
after Past historic
*should ponder 'pon a recent London **Times'***
leader."...

and really they should reach, like the London paper, the not unpalatable inference that :

"'Tis all about a successful British royal visit
to republican India: 'Tandoori with Chips',
précis exquisite
of prospering Indo-British relationships."

before concluding with our poet :

"Despite the prophets of doom,
there's no obvious
reason why our British heirloom
shouldn't bloom in republican Mauritius."

The St. Lucian-born and Jamaican poet, Derek Walcott, now Professor of English Literature at Boston University, who did all of us, Creole Islanders, proud recently by winning the 1992 Nobel Prize for Literature,

perceptively said of his writing method, when interviewed about his poetry :

"I want the casual throw of the thing, like something
draped over a chair."

We find, **mutatis mutandis**, echoes of this technique in Manrakhan's "What a Varsity!" and in other poems of the same ilk, where informed comment on the Mauritian situation drapes itself, so to say, over the relaxed armchair of reflective analysis, thus :

"'Twixt Brussels and Réduit,
where, oh MEPD!, is the promised lolly from the
EEC –
hijacked in an Integrated Development maze?
Never mind! We're poor; we think – Glory will blaze!"

And there will slip in as well quite movingly in other critical poems the further need for a compassionate, dimensional level to our material development :

"'Twas all calmly done
with continuing
well-thought action
skilfully combining
moderation, equity and freedom.
Now our future will sublimate
If wisdom and compassion we can inculcate."

Comparisons are always invidious, as we all know but I cannot escape the rather nagging feeling that, here and there, in the poetry so lavishly offered us in this volume, there sneaks in somehow, not always indubitably flawlessly, a James Thurber-ish note –

namely that here a tale unfolds itself, segmentally, if not fragmentarily, in a formal way that is, through deftly ironic, almost impressionistic touches, to reach to a moralistic whole in its entirety.

I believe, all in all, that this is, perhaps, the best tribute one can pay to this endearing and very laudable collection of poetry.

11th November 1992

Regis FANCHETTE
M. A. (Cantab)

L'ENFANT PREFERE

These lines are being scribbled,
by order personal
of Reena and Vishal,
for your perusal.

Why not saddle your good selves to that task,
I did venture to ask,
only to be told: 'Do not bask
in the glow of your special single-malt flask!'

Since at poetry
they look but scarcely,
thus will I have my own and adroitly
pour my tale of woe unto your custody.

It began to take shape
shortly after you left for the Cape.
Our haven of peace has escape
become for Noise's audioscape.

Vishal moved into your room
and very soon,
the hi-fi began to fume —
for his tune to reach you, I presume.

When he occasionally gets tired,
Reena gym-tonic attired,
with fluid food a'fired,
does her share, decibel inspired.

In moments rare,
when both so declare,
Dada joins in the funfair
with his radio-tape, for more fare.

As if that is not enough,
Mami puts me off
with many a rebuff
'cos I'm too tough on your comfort's stuff.

A great display,
wouldn't you say
of the family's way
to convey its affection for ***l'enfant préféré?***

Jagadish MANRAKHAN

On behalf of
la famille préférée de l'enfant

5, Impasse Poupinel de Valence
Rose-Hill, Mauritius.

4th July, 1991: 02.30 hours

MV : REDUIT

My dear Editor,
Clearly MV
does not know that Varsity
at Réduit
proposes to abstract half a billion
of the Treasury's bullion
for aims capital,
and to double its recurrent annual
to Rs 125 million —
all this cannot be ***sans*** *boldness of vision,*
sans *approach intellectually aggressive,*
and ***sans*** *thinking creative.*

Our obstacle main lies in PR,
as confirmed by the World Bank's radar.
A long-term solution
does require sound reflection
on the first quarter-century
of ***Varsity at Réduit:***
en route shortly to M.V.
— and to you, Mr Editor.

October 1991

Notes : This poem was in response to a commentary by M.V. entitled 'The University needs a new Mission Statement' (*L'Express Dimanche,* 20th October 1991). In a note accompanying the poem, reference was made to an earlier undertaking to send the text **Varsity at Réduit** to the Editor. The poem was not published by *L'Express,* nor was receipt of the text acknowledged.

OU & IOU

Under the spell
were the Crécerelle
and I, and countless
others doubtless,
till our Civil Servants, indefatigable,
with logic inimitable
did decree
that the degree
of the OU
is non-U,
despite whatever learned Professors
and hard-nosed Vice-Chancellors
have safe-fashioned from preachings political
about higher education remedial.
What an IOU
in view
can only be our perplex'd
reflex!

February 1992

Notes : OU stands for 'Open University', Milton Keynes, England.
IOU may also stand for 'Indian Ocean University'.

'Dans l'oeil de la Crécerelle' is a regular feature in the daily *'Le Mauricien'*.

WHAT A VARSITY! (1)

Réduit's Examiners External
who ensure that its degrees
are comparable
with those of U.K., French and Australian 'varsities
come from institutions which — we're told on sound authority —
work till late at night, whereas we close at Three-thirty.

Yet we produce degrees of quality,
and conduct research regularly,
with reports duly submitted to funding agencies;
we publish in no less than nine-and-thirty
international journals, and in various reports of other universities —
More for less! what an efficiency!

Quick, PRB:
parity in salary start with the magistracy
is no longer our submission!
With evidence so loftly and weighty,
'tis an obsolete notion:
treble the relativity for academe!

March 1992

Notes : In response to a TV programme of the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation on Mauritian Education.

PRB: Pay Research Bureau, the organisation which reviews Salaries and Conditions of Service in the Public Sector and at the University.

WHAT A VARSITY! (2)

The MEPD
e'en after having to swallow its pride, scorn and animosity
concerning a long-term forecasting study,
is distinctly lucky — and full of money!

In the meantime, another agency
their reformed wishes should satisfy easily —
the outcome of originality, initiated brilliantly
by 'varsity, a dozen years previously.

That's when the resurrected DODO
will emerge in Environs' grand congregation in Rio,
after IIASA's fine-tuning mathematical
of MAURITIUS 2000, epochal.

'Twixt Brussels and Réduit,
where, oh MEPD! is the promised lolly from the EEC —
hijacked in an Integrated Development maze?
Never mind! We're poor, we think! — Glory will blaze!

March 1992

Notes : DODO : Demonstration of Development Options.

EEC : European Economic Community.

IIASA : International Institute of Applied Systems' Analysis, Laxenburg, near Vienna.

MEPD : Ministry of Economic Planning and Development.

ROUGAILLE 'N' PUD

What's all the fuss
about the Republic?
'Tis enough to nonpluss
even royalist Logic.

Those souls nostalgic
who hanker
after Past historic
should ponder 'pon a recent London Times' leader.

'Tis all about a successful British royal visit
to republican India: 'Tandoori with Chips',
précis exquisite
of prospering Indo-British relationships.

Despite the prophets of doom,
there's no obvious
reason why our British heirloom
shouldn't bloom in republican Mauritius.

March 1992

TOILED TOIL

My dear Editor,
the PM of your newspaper
has, today, conjectured ***viva voce*** *with quill,*
that the one at 'Emmanuel Anquetil',
has ***either*** *tolled the knell of research academical,*
or *given Réduit a slap monumental,*
or *provided 'varsity, unwittingly,*
with a golden revenge opportunity
altho' *it could also be gift season'd*
with swift-acting poison.

In this battle royal,
(soon to be republican),
'twixt the Towers Intellectual,
who has the better plan:
rich MEPD or Réduit-the-poor?
Watch this space especial
for journalism clair-obscure,
rarely investigative, oft purgatorial,
Oh, Donne! From such a toil, how can L'Express *ensure*
'twill not be diminished, e'en if the toll is not treble sepulchral?

March 1992

John Donne (1572-1631): Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in Mankind; And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee. (in **Devotions**).

Notes : Not published by *L'Express*.
The Government's Emmanuel Anquetil Building, named after a historic labour leader, houses the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development (MEPD).

NOW THAT THE REPUBLIC IS HERE:
(1) LET IT STAY FOREVER

The Parisians of 1789
Republic notion decreed: home and away.
L'Ile de France replied: Liberty's mine! —
and went the UDI way.

The Republic was to return
on design Imperial, yet patterned for local dressage.
For most 'twas equation well stern —
Liberté + Fraternité + Egalité = Esclavage.

Amid the smoke and thunder of battle,
that Republic collapsed in 1810.
Did the Dodos have an earlier one, gobbled —
in royalist feasts gargantuan?

On the 12th March 1992
came the ultimate step constitutional
to make of Mauritius a Republic anew —
we hope this time for perpetuity.

Therein let no Monk undo Cromwell's work;
let neither Ney nor Talleyrand restore the monarchy.
Instead of senseless gluttony, let there be a balanced framework —
to weave a rich fabric with enterprise and social justice in harmony.

March 1992

Note : UDI = Unilateral Declaration of Independence

NOW THAT THE REPUBLIC IS HERE:
(2) LET'S ENRICH THE PUBLIC DEBATE

Mr Speaker,
the change in name of the Assembly
'pon which you preside —
from 'Legislative' to 'National' —
should lead to efficacy more than incremental,
with more time to deliberate on policies to guide
governance, and less legislation enacted in a hurry
in our Single Chamber.

After several decades of frantic legislative action,
Mr Speaker, 'tis time surely
to take stock:
too many laws ad-hoc?
overgovernance with excessive bureaucracy?
too much divisive recrimination? too little constructive vision?

March 1992

NOW THAT THE REPUBLIC IS HERE:
(3) LET ENTERPRISE BLOOM

In 1984, there came to Réduit
a Professor of Biochemistry
who hailed from Tennessee
and knew Business intimately.
With Varsity and Country in deep austerity,
he decreed: 'Cheer up, you'll soon have Prosperity!'
When we queried the basis of such augury,
his reply was: 'Why! your enterprising spirit, so lively,'

In the tough socio-economic warfare
looming ahead, national welfare
will not be a 'second chance' affair,
but one of getting the main share
everywhere.
with 'first-time' savoir faire.

March 1992

NOW THAT THE REPUBLIC IS HERE:
(4) LESSER BUT BETTER GOVERNANCE

Shaping frame societal
is now such that the market reigns supreme.
Only a few decades back 'twas all about planning social.
The Public Sector, well swollen, has to reshape extreme.
SLIM OR PERISH!

Heavy unemployment, oh Parkinson!
was to multiply exponential
both personnel and remuneration
till the market has decreed threshold final.
SLIM OR PERISH!

'Cos of Number in inflation
neither real wages nor plain efficiency
will pierce through any appreciation
from the PRB
SLIM OR PERISH!

Manpower, signing a'plenty
in Public and clocking scarcity
elsewhere, will mark accordingly
its market price and quality.
SLIM OR PERISH!

March 1992

NOW THAT THE REPUBLIC IS HERE:
(5) LET'S BE WISE AND COMPASSIONATE

Evidence historical
contains many cases showing
Mauritius, well prudential,
investing and insuring
against a future problematical.
Otherwise we would not be
where we are presently.

'Twas all calmly done
with continuing
well-thought action
skilfully combining
moderation, equity and freedom.
Now our future will sublimate
if wisdom and compassion we can inculcate.

March 1992

JA, PROTEA NOVA!

Much maligned and mistrusted,
Within and outside the Republic,
they have voted,
bold and systematic,
to dismantle
Man's colour wall
prejudicial and predatorial,
stigma and all.
JA, PROTEA NOVA!
YES, A NEW PROTEA!

We must accelerate
action remedial
against canker desperate
still possessing deadly potential.
And the world can no more afford
socio-economic stagflation
while health awaits at the switchboard
with a woken giant in enforced hibernation.
JA, PROTEA NOVA!
YES, A NEW PROTEA!

March 1992

Notes : The Protea is the national flower of the Republic of South Africa.

AN UNEASY BINOMIAL; AN UNCERTAIN SMILE

I. The Call from Ipanema

Is 'environmentally – sustainable
economic development' feasible?
The Stockholm Conference of 1972
thought so, and drew
world-wide attention
to poverty-driven pollution.
That gathering took many another step,
and helped spawn UNEP,
national Eco-Departments, global air monitoring,
and NGOs in profusion astounding.
And yet, by the turn into the 90s,
Planet Earth had lost another million biological species,
480 million tonnes of top soil, and 200 million ha of forest;
gained another 1.6 billion people and 120 million ha of desert.
It was enduring worsening air and river pollution,
global warming, acid rains, and toxic waste accretion,
ozone layer thinning and puncturing, nuclear nightmares;
and ocean poisoning – here and there, everywhere.
'Business as usual' was no longer option credible:
Ecological and Social Poverty made an unassailable binomial.
But whither development sustainable of global prosperity?
The call from Ipanema long a'coming, spanned two weary
years ere the Earth Summit of early June 92, in Rio de Janeiro,
a gem of city, briefly cleansed, yet a'wasting on time borrow'd.
There we gathered – frowning Security, cheerful Presidents and Ministers;
suave Diplomats; fervent Religious Leaders and followers;
impassive Bankers; harassed Civil Servants; busy Journalists;
voluble PRO's and NGO representatives; learned Scientists;
even-keeled Economists; absent-minded Professors – all 30000 of us!

Within islands of security, armed with documents diverse,
we toiled: at the huge, formal, Rio Centro; in places various;
at the Global Forum – by–the–sea, blessed from high by Jesus.

II. The Eco-Summit's Agenda of Agendas

To encompass fully binomial uneasy,
innumerable matters we discussed exhaustively:
Agenda 21.
Biodiversity for everyone.
Climate change.
Decisions for change.
Energy; Earth Charter.
Family.
Green Cross; Gender.
Health and Human Ecology.
International Eco-Court and Constitution.
Jungle convention.
Kari-Oca native village.
Law and language
Money and military pollution.
Networking and cooperation.
Ozone layer.
Poverty and population pressure.
Quality of living
Recycling
Sustainable strategies off-shore.
Trafficking of animals.
UN's gang of four.
Vigil ecumenical.
Worms and organic fertilizer.
X-factor.
Year 2050.
Zero-sum obstinacy.

'The Rivers of Babylon' and 'We are the World' we sang, inspired;
Special Lectures we heard; saw ART-ECO and 'Images of Fire'.
Urged to 'Go Home', we braved Rio's slums, visited the Jardim Botanico;
ECOTECH, Tijuca Park, the Maracana – and climbed the Corcovado.

III. The Serpent in the Afterglow of Rio

There , methought Christ wore a faint smile
which began to wane after a'while —
Eye-strain? heightened nerves a'top windswept Hunchback?
Jesus tired with His enforced arms-at-full-stretch Carioca act?,
or ired with the living map underneath, shrouded in polluted haze?
Rio's string of famed beaches, Copacabana, and others, deserve praise,
but what about its inner ecology – environs and people?
The broad, distant, sweep of Guanabara Bay hides havoc ecological,
needing 670 million US dollars to salvage.
To remedy past neglect and spoilage,
promote urban, montane and forest renewal
in Brazil, would require far more wherewithal.
'Agenda 21', UNCED's Plan to restore the ecology
of Planet Earth during the next century,
would absorb 125 billion dollars annually.
Striving to raise the lot of its starving poor substantially,
the South has no more to spare for the Earth's Environment,
largely damaged through the North's industrial development.
The North has never been so poor, seemingly,
even with 2-home, 3-car, 4-TV families a'plenty.
Yet it is anxious to be generous
and invest to own the wealth of rain forests – to stay prosperous:

a single gene from Ethiopia protects California's barley industry;
a Malagasy wild plant may become Leukaemia's remedy;
the South, however poor, must remain Carbon-Sink extraordinary
to prevent global warming, in chivalrous philantrophy.
'Twixt the rich and the poor, how should ecological
costs and benefits be shared? what is Binomial fair and durable?
After the Cold War, do we need a trillion-dollar annual arms' bill?
The Serpent helped Man lose Paradise; oh, Jesus on-the-hill!
will that happen with Planet Earth also? —
Jesus smiled stern: the only hope left in the afterglow of Rio.

July 1992

Notes :

line 3 That Conference was attended by only two Prime Ministers, Olaf Palme (Sweden) and Indira Gandhi (India).

line 8 UNEP: United Nations' Environmental Programme.

line 10 NGO: Non-governmental organisation.

line 13 ha: hectares.

line 29 Including more than 115 Heads of State or of Government.

line 30 Including the Heidelberg Appeal from 300 scientists (52 Nobel Prize Winners) to political leaders at Rio; and the Taplow Court Declaration (Commonwealth Human Ecology Council and Soka Gakkai International).

line 31 Including more than 70 locations in Rio, a city of mountains and forests by the ocean.

line 61 'The Rivers of Babylon' was sung at the opening of Global Forum in Flamengo Park beach, Guanabara Bay, while 'we are the World' greeted the Viking replica ship Gaia, also at Flamengo Park beach, after her 13-month voyage of 17000 nautical miles from Bergen, Norway (2nd June).

line 62 Among the Special lectures were Cousteau's **Convince to Conquer** and Ramphal's **Rio and the Future of 'Our Country The planet'** ARTECO: Exhibition of the works of 120 artists from the Americas on the theme of Ecology, held at the Museum of Modern Art.

line 63 'Go Home': refers to billboards reading: 'ECOLOGISTS, GO HOME! State of Amazonas, the home of ecologists'. Jardim Botanico: Rio's Botanical Gardens, 170ha, with over 5000 species, founded in 1808; a UN Biosphere Reserve.

line 64 ECOTECH. An international symposium and exhibition of environmental technologies for ecologically sustainable development, held in another Centre not far from Rio Centro.
Tijuca Park: one of Rio's forests, another UN Biosphere Reserve.
Maracana: high altar of Brazilian football, the World's largest soccer stadium, with a capacity of nearly 200000.
Corcovado: 700-metre mountain, also known as the 'Hunchback' from its shape. A giant statue of Christ the Redeemer (Cristo Redentor) stands thereon, measuring 30 metres in height and 28 metres wide (from finger-tip to finger-tip).

line 68 Carioca: pertaining to Rio de Janeiro.

line 77 UNCED: United Nations' Conference on Environment and Development, Rio, 3-14 June 1992.

line 87 against a deadly virus disease.

line 95 refers to the 'Seven Falls' legend of the Guarani (Brazilian) Indians. The evil Serpent God, living in the waters of the Great River, captures Flora, symbol of Nature and daughter of the Sun God in order to rob the latter of his powers. Furious, the Sun God takes balls of fire from his body and hurls them into the River, forming craters which in turn give rise to cataracts. The Serpent God disappears, but will return in the form of ecological disaster.

IMPROMPTU

Auckland : *a million sails.*
Brussels : *sprouts and Euro-Mace.*
Cape Town : *Race' N' Pace.*
Hongkong : *Loser wins All?*
Singapore : *How dare the leaves fall?*
Xian : *Cultural enigma.*
York : *Same smell, wrong colour.*
Zanzibar : *dhows and clove-nails.*

July 1992

IMPROMPTU (2)

Detroit : *car culture.*
Edinburgh : *sound culture.*
Florence : *sculpture.*
Genoa : *ad(d)venture.*
Maastricht : *Euro-future?*
New Haven : *Hail, Ivy!*
Toulouse : *airy unity.*
Ujjain : *astro-inquiry.*
Vancouver : *wet medley.*
Wageningen : *agro-study.*

July 1992

OH, HECK!

Restore Slavery
and Indentured Labour;
add advanced Social Planning
of unknown origin;
the Market,
just forget.
Shake the Mixture
with undue Authority —
and you've organised Chaos, by Heck!
while we're left with Meck!

July 1992

Note : Meck: small coin (colloq.)

ENDANGERED

Many species of the Ibis,
tall, long-necked with bill curved,
are now endangered, oh Isis,
e'en if in Ancient Egypt, it was wading bird sacred!

In Athena's Southern Isle,
there exists a sole Hyophorbe amaricaulis,
that palm we're preserving — to multiply, with smile
and biotech guile, so far in vain — oh, Isis!

Today the USSR has become the CIS:
were the Ibo people in advance of their time?
How many of the endangered, oh Isis,
have perished 'cos of uncaring Paradigm!

July 1992

Note : The Ibos (also known as the Igbos) live in Biafra (Nigeria) and in the Niger-Congo Basin.

ENDANGERED (2)

Come to think of it, oh Isis!
history-steeped Varsity
is now sufficiently in crisis,
to be deemed as species endangered – verily!
Gone are the great days of splendour,
when it could scarcely do a thing wrong,
as it probed Past and Future.
with the Present providing enough all along.

Now, midst Treasury Heat and Market Chill,
Big Science and High Tech, frowning Courts, Argent
Dwindling, Telescoped Time and Great Expectations,
State Tinkering and Good Intentions,
Varsity is expected to discover Salvation triumphant:
a chance in a million?, or History's greatest overkill?

July 1992

ORATORY'S GIFT TO LOYALTY

Friend of all and enemy of none,
with a courtesy that was old fashioned;
at home with notions scientific and technological
while remaining proud of his education classical;
thro' nimble tongue, rasping wit, and prodigious memory,
dry humour, strict discipline and courage a'plenty —
thus did he serve Democracy, Law and Politics, Country, Varsity,
and Humanity, with great valour and uncommon ability.

All this, and more, History will record
on Edward Harold Walter,
loyal knight with broadsword
ever ready, for the poor and down-trodden to succour.
But, above all, he will be remembered by Posterity
as Oratory's Gift to Loyalty.

July 1992

Notes

Harold Walter (1922-92): Knight Bachelor, QC; army service (World War II); lawyer, politician, Minister (Works, Health, Labour, External Affairs); one of the founders of modern Mauritius. He chaired many UN and other international committees, and was honoured by several countries. His hobbies included deer-hunting and literature.

He served the nascent University of Mauritius as a member of its governing Council (1966-71), and later as a guest lecturer; in 1986, the University conferred on him a Doctorate of Civil Law *honoris causa*.

CAMPUS CHORUS – 3

What is the basis
of our assurance
that we're not wrong
on matters fundamental?

Why, 'tis
our insistence
all along
on Moderation External!

That synopsis,
true for our whole existence,
has meant, time and again, opinion second
with outcome liberal and impartial.

In the final analysis,
'tis also self-confidence
beckoned, leavened and fashioned,
to perform at level international.

July 1992

TOO EARLY A CROSS

I still remember seeing him saunter
up the long dusty road, and past yonder
fast-flowing canal — veritable
moat that made his abode impregnable
according to my imagination.
Methought he did walk with lighted vision:
sheer hero-worship from a mere junior?
or did that tall Royal College Senior
have something in him that was especial,
besides being slim yet unstoppable?

His particular literary skill
was part of the distinct lore of Rose Hill;
rare doubt on his vast potential vanished
when higher school Laureate he finished.
He left for Paris to read Medicine
ere mind literary he'd illumine.
Town and Country, changing, kept him in view
as Intellect whole became his purview.
Then from Elysium came call final
for Jean Fanchette: — in short cut most cruel.

July 1992

Notes : Poem in memory of Jean Fanchette (1933-92), man of medicine and of letters. The review he founded, and edited, **Two Cities** was a major attempt at bridging the cultural divide across the Channel. Beau Bassin-Rose Hill, the second most populous municipality, is often known as the cultural capital of Mauritius.

TOWER 'N' WATER

To inspire thoughts coherent yet elevated, Oh Minerva!
a campus should have at least a Tower,
a large lake, or a river, murmuring quietly
besides green space, trees, paths — and sound buildings a'plenty.

At Réduit, on the Mount Peveril site,
a Tower is in the making, to the delight
of mathematicians, and various experimental scientists,
even if they've to share it with Central Admin. and other opportunists.

And soon on the College site, there'll be
another to house modern workshops, drawing rooms, IT
labs, not to mention miscellaneous 'varsity needs —
growing as the Country's Second Industrialisation Phase proceeds.

With several efficient cross-flows, both Towers lofty
will surely draw the best from Science and Technology
to devise a water-scape appropriate for the campus at Réduit,
blended with terraced cloisters for inmates beyond the pale of S & T.

August 1992

Notes : IT : Information Technology
S & T : Science and Technology

ECO-HEALTH

'Varsity had previously drawn attention
to the Country's unexpectedly high rate of usage —
of firewood in its villages and towns;
of coral sand in relation to natural renewal;
of rocks from its cane fields for construction;
of agro-chemicals, risking over-dosage;
of underground water with dangerous rebounds;
of its zone coastal for waste disposal, with hazards considerable.
With eco-damage yet to reach threshold critical,
prompt remedial steps were envisaged, and implemented.
'Varsity now renews an eco-health clarion call vital:
our NCDs have features which are often less connected
with heredity than predicted by medical theory conventional —
more than we think is our health eco-related!

August 1992

Note NCDs : Non-Communicable Diseases

DISTINGUISHED NEIGHBOUR

On the first day of July at Le Réduit,
was held the Swearing-In Ceremony
for our second President national,
and also our neighbour most notable.
As I sat in the packed Hall of Mirrors,
I kept thinking of colonial Governors
who fostered research and higher education,
and of their successors in transition:
Rennie, Williams, Osman, Burrenchobay,
Ramgoolam, Ringadoo — friends all the way.
With President Uteem, new Head of State,
Varsity at Réduit renews mandate
of warm friendship and of good neighbourhood
to 'The End of the World', midst all the wood.

August 1992

Notes : The first-ever Vice-President of the Republic of Mauritius, Sir Rabindranath Ghurburrun, was also sworn into office on the 1st of July by the Acting Chief Justice, the Hon. Rajsoomer Lallah. Present at Le Réduit that day was Sir Veerasamy Ringadoo, last Governor-General, and first President of Mauritius.

'The End of the World' is also the name given to a promontory in the grounds of Le Réduit at the confluence of two deep rivers.